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Des perspectives d'emploi assombries pour les finissants et des transformations dans les programmes d'enseignement font que le rôle du conseiller d'orientation devient de plus en plus important. Tenant compte de ces changements, le service d'orientation du collège John-Abbott a entrepris un sondage en vue de savoir comment les étudiants perçoivent les services qui leur sont offerts; le présent rapport décrit les techniques utilisées et les résultats de ce sondage.

L'instrument utilisé (reproduit en annexe) est basé sur le questionnaire TABS (Teaching Analysis by Students) conçu pour l'évaluation des enseignants; suite à une modification des questions pour le rendre apte à évaluer les conseillers d'orientation, il a pris le nom de TRS (Teaching Research System). Il aborde les aspects suivants: 1. renseignements sur les étudiants; 2. accessibilité et disponibilité du conseiller; 3. relations interpersonnelles; 4. compétence du conseiller; 5. commentaires généraux. Envoyé par la poste à 867 étudiants en janvier 1984, il a été complété par 449 d'entre eux.

En général, les résultats démontrent que le service d'orientation répond bien aux besoins de la clientèle étudiante. Comme prévu, il apparaît que la majorité de sa clientèle est constituée d'étudiants qui se destinent aux études universitaires. Bien que les relations interpersonnelles soient généralement appréciées, les étudiants déplorent l'emploi d'un langage trop spécialisé, l'inconstance des réponses à une même question. En ce qui concerne l'accessibilité et la disponibilité, les étudiants les ont jugées très satisfaisantes, tout en désirant pouvoir obtenir de brèves rencontres sans rendez-vous. Enfin, la compétence des conseillers d'orientation a été jugée favorablement.

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ACADEMIC ADVISING EVALUATION

REPORT SUBMITTED TO:
JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE
RESEARCH and DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MARCH 1984

AUTHORS:
LAURIE POOLE
CATHERINE SIDORENKO
ACADEMIC ADVISORS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The role of the academic advisor has seen tremendous change within the last few years. Five years ago one might have described an Advisor as one who gives information regarding college matters, university programs and admission requirements and possibly career information. It is no longer that simplistic. The role has become multi-facted; the process has become complex - all because student needs have changed.

Student needs have changed as a result of changing socio-economic factors. Jobs are hard to come by, so we see many more students who are choosing post-secondary education as an alternative to umemployment. Admission to universities is increasingly competitive making it an unlikely option for the mediocre student. Those students who do have the marks for admission are choosing university programs which they perceive as "tickets" to guaranteed employment. Financial restraints have affected students' choices of universities - we are seeing a decrease in the number heading for Ontario universities. In addition, there seems to be an increase in the severity of personal problems that some of our students must cope with.

What implications do these trends have for advising services? More than ever before, Advisors have to care for and take an interest in the students with whom they work. Each student's goals and aspirations are as different as the backgrounds they bring with them. An Advisor never knows which student will walk through the door - the one who is hearing impaired; the weaker student refused university admission; the student who requires financial assistance to complete his/her studies; the potential medical student requesting a letter of reference, etc. The Advisor must be perceptive, sensitive and able to adapt to the individual needs of the students they advise - not always an easy task.

Advisors have much more university and career information to keep on top of than in previous years. In spite of monetary cutbacks, universities are introducing new programs on a regular basis. Advisors must work hard to be well-informed and spend tremendous amounts of energy liaising with universities on a regular basis. If Advisors are to provide an effective service, they must provide the type of information students are seeking.

Because of a significant increase in student enrollment and because of the complexities students face when trying to make decisions, there is an increased demand and need for advising than ever before. Advisors are playing a much greater role in helping students to develop skills they will use for life. Students cannot afford to make decisions without knowing where and how to locate the information they require.

Given the changes in student needs and the implications for the role of an Advisor, the Academic Advising Department at John Abbott College wanted to know how students rated the services. Do they think Advising offers a quality service? Is there something we're not doing that we should be doing?

Advising last evaluated its services in 1981, using an open-ended, mailed questionnaire. We felt that it was time to evaluate the Department again. TABS, Teaching Analysis by Students, an evaluation instrument for teachers, developed at the Clinic to Improve University Teaching at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, was being improved for user-friendliness by the Faculty Professional Development Services at John Abbott College. This instrument appealed to the Advising Department because it seemed adaptable to advising needs for several reasons: It provided the possibility of computerized data; it

provided the opportunity for Advisors to compare self-evluation with students' evaluation; it provided the researchers with an interesting tool to evaluate the Advising Department as a whole. All that needed to be done was to develop a questionnaire which would suit the program. In doing so, the department had to consider which facets of advising services they wanted to evaluate and receive information about.

In order to give any meaning to the results of this evaluation, it was necessary to obtain information about the students surveyed. What program were they in? What semester? How many times had they seen an Advisor? Why did they come to advising?

Advisors felt they wanted feedback on accessibility and operations of the service. Were they available when students need them? Was the receptionist friendly? Did the appointment system work well? It was also important to know how students rated Advisors' interpersonal skills. Were they perceived as caring and interested? Were they attentive listeners? Did they communicate clearly? In addition, Advisors wanted to know how students rated the information received from Advisors. Were they able to obtain the information they were looking for? Where was there room for improvement? Lastly, the researchers wanted to provide an opportunity for students to comment fully on their experiences with academic advising and to make suggestions for improvement.

The following report provides a detailed outline of the methodology and results of the evaluation of advising services as well as recommendations for the future.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

In order to design an evaluation questionnaire, the researchers studied the publications available within the department. These documents (see Bibliography) were major publications from ACT, The American College Testing Program and from NACADA, The National Academic Advising Association. Both of these organizations are considered to be leaders in the field of advising and act as clearinghouses for innovations and studies on academic advising. Studies from American colleges and universities and from institutions which use professional and faculty advisors were adapted to match the nature and function of advising tasks at John Abbott College.

The research designers elected to use a mailed questionnaire as a method of gathering data to evaluate academic advising services and to help identify student needs as they relate to advising.

The questionnaire was composed of four main sections (1) A summary of student information (2) Accessibility and availability of advisors, (3) Interpersonal skills and (4) The advisor's knowledge and access to general information. All questions were designed to be close-ended to facilitate computer analysis. Responses had to fit one of five categories:

A. No Improvement Needed (Very Good to Excellent)

B. Little Improvement Needed (Generally Good)

C. Improvement Needed (Mediocre)

D. Considerable Improvement Needed (Mediocre)

E. Not Applicable

To compensate for the restrictive nature of these four sections, a final (fifth) section was included for General Comments.

Students were simply asked to circle the correct responses and return the completed questionnaire in the self-addressed stamped envelope. The questionnaires were to be completely anonymous, although several students who included personal comments signed their forms.

In order to give individual advisors an indication of their own personal evaluations, the questionnaires were printed on five different colors - one for each Advisor. To ensure that students were sent the appropriate color according to the advisor whom they had seen, the appointment record files were surveyed and lists of student numbers were categorized by advisor.

These five lists were then sent to the college's Records and Reporting Office for computer loading to generate address labels for the mailing. The lists were kept separate and staff helped to prepare the mailing according to the color coding assigned to each advisor.

The mailing occured during the week of January 2nd, 1984. A large proportion of the completed questionnaires were returned during the next ten-day period. To ensure the greatest rate of return possible, the raw data from the questionnaires was not transferred onto OPSCAN sheets until February 15, 1984. A student was hired to perform this task which was accomplished in eleven hours.

The return rate of the mailed questionnaires was extremely high, almost 50%. A total of 449 were returned out of a total of 867 mailed. This allowed a worthwhile and statistically significant analysis of data.

The five categories of OPSCAN sheets were sent to the Management Information Systems Department for computer analysis. The results were available the same day. (February 21, 1984). This first run of analysis was done on an individual basis. A week later (February 29, 1984) a group analysis was done to provide a complete picture of the department's performance.

During the month of March, the researchers analyzed the data and compiled the report.

CHAPTER 3

ADAPTATION OF TABS/TRS

TABS ("Teaching Analysis by Students")[1] is one part of an integrated approach to instructional improvement, which was developed by the Clinic to Improve University Teaching at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The approach involves a logical sequence of consultation identified as the teaching improvement process. It is built on the notion that the consultation process lies at the heart of faculty development.

The TABS questionnaire is meant to be used as part of a multi-faceted teaching improvement process which includes such components as peer evaluation, video-taping, value clarification, etc. John Abbott College has made the TABS questionnaire available to its faculty. The Faculty Professional Development Services Department of John Abbott undertook to make the system user friendly in 1983. The system was designed so that the non-computer specialist could sit at a computer terminal and

1. Create their own catalogue of questions.
2. Use the standard questionnaire.
3. Add/delete questions.
4. Put in their own self-assessment.
5. Put in their predictions of student responses.
6. Request that M.I.S. print the number of questionnaires needed for class use.
7. Have data analyzed.

At the time that this study was being designed, the first user friendly

1 Berquist, Phillips, Quehl.

version of TABS had been completed and was being tested by a sample group of faculty. The new system was called the Teaching Research System (TRS).

The researchers, in consultation with Denise Demers-Bourgeois, the coordinator of the project, decided that the nature of this research questionnaire was highly compatible with the structure of TRS. It was decided to accept TRS without questioning its validity and reliability as a scientific tool. This study was designed to be an in-house research project to gather feedback directly from students and to utilize an established, proven method to analyze data. TRS met this goal. It was not the intention of the researchers to develop a scientific tool to measure the effectiveness of academic advisors. The success and limitations of entering such a project without an in-depth analysis of research will be outlined in this chapter.

Table 3-1 Outlines Comparable Factors

Table 3-2 Outlines the Steps in Adapting TABS/TRS.

The Format of The Questionnaire

TABS (called TRS from here on) is divided into two sections. Each section permits a maximum of fifty-five items. Those in Section I have a standard five-response format; whereas Section II allows for variable responses. TRS permits the user to create a questionnaire which meets specific needs. This structure allowed the researchers sufficient flexibilty to accomplish their goals.

Accessing the TRS Program

TRS is written in such a fashion that the user need only be assigned a password and user name to have access to the TRS program. During the summer of 1983 the researchers created their computerized questionnaire. At that time, the full TRS program was not available and assistance was required from MIS personnel to log onto the TRS program. The loading of questions took approximately one hour. Once the questionnaire was created, it was stored and ready for use by the advisors.

In creating the computerized advising questionnaire, it was necessary to follow the TRS sections. Section I of TRS deals with student assessment of the instructor's teaching skills using a five point scale.

A. no improvement (excellent performance)
B. little improvement (generally good performance)
C. improvement needed (generally mediocre performance)
D. considerable improvement needed (poor performance)
E. not a necessary skill

This type of question structure matched our questionnaire's Section II, Accessibility and Availability of Advisors, Section III, Interpersonal Skills and Section IV, General Information.

Section II of TRS is comprised of items in which students assess their own learning as well as workload and text books, etc. It is possible in this section, to change not only the question but the answer. This

therefore was used for our Section I Student Data and for the last question in Section IV "I would recommend Academic Advising to my friends" A(Yes) B (No)

Therefore, our first seven questions actually became the last seven questions of our computerized print-out. Student responses were transposed onto OPSCAN sheets for processing by computer. For example, question one actually began on page 2 of the student's answer sheet under (Section II) Accessibility and Availability of Advisors, while the first question under Student Data (Section I) was number 26.

This did not prove to be confusing in analysis because the final computer print-outs displayed the data in such a way that the entire question was described or listed beside the numeric score (raw score and/or percentage).

Transferring data onto Opscan sheets followed normal instructions (using pencil, no additional markings, etc.). A student was hired, and given specific instruction due to the change of order of questions between the mailed questionnaire and the computer analysis order.

Advisor's Self Assessments and Predictions

Advisors were given cards from the Faculty Professional Development Services on which to establish a user name (no more than eight characters) and a

password (no more than eight characters) in order for each advisor to be able to load their self-assessments and calculate their student predictions. This data was submitted under the strictest confidence to the Operations Manager of Management Information Systems. Once these words were registered, the user was returned his/her card. The user was then required to keep track of the reference number generated by the computer each time the program was used. This allowed the data to be identified as belonging to the particular user. Each of the five advisors went through this process. In addition, a user name and password was created for the advising group self-assessments and student prediction.

The advisors spent between 30 to 60 minutes preparing their predictions for loading onto the computer. It took approximately 30 to 60 minutes to input these predictions. Advising has a computer terminal within its office area on which to do this type of work.

TRS is extremely user friendly and the advisors found it relatively simple to load this data. There is a fairly lengthly preamble which explains the purpose and the functioning of the program.

Analysis of Data

At the same time that Opscan sheets were submitted to Management Information Systems, the cards indicating user name and password and reference number were submitted. The individual advisor data was immediately processed.

However, when all of the data (on Opscan sheets) was combined for a group evaluation, the computer program did not function. It was discovered that TRS program was written so that the maximum of 275 Opscan sheets could be processed at one time. This was below our total sample of 449. As there was insufficient time to change the program, the group sample was run in two batches using alternate Opscan sheets to ensure a balance in the two subgroups.

This created two sets of computer print-outs from which our findings would be culled, rather than one which would summarize the entire data. This posed no major problems. Both print-outs were compared and all of the data showed similar tendencies and often identical findings. It was however, somewhat inconvenient to the researchers when analyzing the findings, because two sets of data had to be studied. Throughout the analysis, the researchers were required to do manual arithmatic calculations.

Presentation of Findings

The computer print-outs, which TRS produces, were much more sophisticated than the researchers' had anticipated. (see Tables # 3-3, 3-4, 3-5, 3-6, 3-7, 3-8). It was necessary to bring in a consultant(Denise Demers-Bourgeois, of the Faculty Professional Development Services) to explain how to read the different presentations of data and to explain what kinds of tendencies and patterns might occur and how one might interpret the data.

Each advisor spent several hours perusing their own results, and all were very keen to share their findings with their co-workers. Several meetings were set up to study the group results and then to compare individual scores with group scores. In this way, trends and patterns could be identified and each advisor could find where they stood in relation to the group.

To formalize this comparative exercise, a short questionnaire was designed to evaluate the TRS process by each advisor and to identify the areas where each advisor varied from the group trend. The findings of this survey have been incorporated within this report. (See Appendix C).

TABLE 3 - 1

ADAPTATION OF TABS/TRS

COMPARABLE FACTORS

TEACHER EVALUATION	ADVISOR EVALUATION
TEACHING PROFESSIONAL	NON-TEACHING PROFESSIONAL
CLASSROOM-GROUP SITUATION	OFFICE-ONE-ON-ONE SITUATION
COURSE CONTENT (SUBJECT MATTER)	GENERAL UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE CAREER INFORMATION
TEACHING INTERPERSONAL SKILLS (DISSIPATED IN GROUP SITUATION)	TEACHING & INTERPERSONAL SKILLS (INTENSIFIED IN ONE-TO-ONE SITUATION)
FORMAL CLASSROOM SITUATION	INFORMAL OFFICE APPOINTMENT
PURPOSE:TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON INDIVIDUAL TEACHER'S PERFORMANCE	PURPOSE:TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON THE ADVISING DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE (SECONDARILY - TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUAL FEEDBACK TO EACH ADVISOR)
MINIMAL COSTS - DISTRIBUTED AND COLLECTED IN CLASSROOM	SIGNIFICANT COSTS: MAILED SURVEY
IMMEDIATE RETURN OF DATA	DELAYED RETURN OF DATA
NEAR COMPLETE RETURN RATE (IF CLASS ATTENDANCE IS HIGH)	LIMITED RETURN RATE (MAILED QUESTIONNAIRE)

TABLE 3 - 2.

Steps In Adaptation Of tabs/trs

1. Match questions to tabs structure & format.
2. Create computerized questionnaire.
3. Collect data and transpose onto opscan sheets.
4. Create individual and group "User Name" and "User Password".
5. Input self-assessments and student predictions on computer terminal.
6. Process data through Data Processing Center.
7. Study individual results.
8. Compare individual results.
9. (Optional) Discuss results with tabs/trs consultant.
10. Report on findings.
11. Make recommendations for improvements to service/individual performance.

JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE ACADEMIC ADVISING EVALUATION

TABLE 3-3

JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE ACADEMIC ADVISING EVALUATION

TABLE 3-4

JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE ACADEMIC ADVISING EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICE PROJECT

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

TABLE 3-5

THIS

FIRST ROW FOR EACH QUESTION REPRESENTS CELL COUNTS
SECOND ROW REPRESENTS PERCENTAGES

ASTERISKS (*) REPRESENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

	1	2	3	4	5
SECTION ONE QUESTIONS					
1. I WAS ABLE TO MAKE A CONVENIENT APPOINTMENT WITH AN ADVISOR.	50	36	9	1	0
	51.02	36.73	9.18*	1.02	.00
2. THE RECEPTIONIST AT THE STUDENT SERVICES DESK WAS FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL.	81	16	2	0	0
	81.82	16.16*	2.02	.00	.00
3. THE ADVISORS ARE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER MY QUICK QUESTIONS.	39	33	15	4	7
	39.80	33.67	15.31*	4.08	7.14
4. I WOULD LIKE ADVISORS TO BE MORE AVAILABLE ON A DROP-IN BASIS.	13	29	31	15	9
	13.40	29.90	31.96*	15.46	9.28
5. A HALF-HOUR APPOINTMENT IS USUALLY SUFFICIENT TIME TO DISCUSS MY QUESTIONS WITH AN ADVISOR.	56	33	7	2	0
	57.14	33.67*	7.14	2.04	.00
6. THE ADVISOR WAS ON TIME FOR MY APPOINTMENT.	74	20	5	0	0
	74.75	20.20*	5.05	.00	.00
7. THE ADVISOR WAS FRIENDLY.	82	14	2	0	0
	83.67	14.29*	2.04	.00	.00
8. THE ADVISOR WAS EASY TO TALK WITH.	74	20	4	0	0
	75.51	20.41*	4.08	.00	.00
9. THE ADVISOR HAS DEMONSTRATED AN INTEREST IN ME AND MY PARTICULAR SITUATION.	61	32	3	1	1
	62.24	32.65*	3.06	1.02	1.02
10. THE ADVISOR WAS A GOOD LISTENER.	71	20	6	1	1
	71.72*	20.20	6.06	1.01	1.01
11. THE ADVISOR EXPLAINED THINGS CLEARLY AND WAS EASY TO UNDERSTAND.	56	34	6	2	0
	57.14	34.69*	6.12	2.04	.00
12. THE ADVISOR DID NOT SEEM RUSHED AND HAD TIME TO SPEND WITH ME.	59	30	7	3	0
	59.60	30.30*	7.07	3.03	.00
13. THE ADVISOR ENCOURAGED AND HELPED ME TOWARDS MY CAREER AND EDUCATIONAL GOALS.	29	39	11	0	16
	30.53	41.05*	11.58	.00	16.84
14. THE ADVISOR WAS SUCCESSFUL IN HELPING ME TO IMPROVE MY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.	16	23	12	2	38
	17.58	25.27*	13.19	2.20	41.76
15. THE ADVISOR HAD A SENSE OF HUMOUR.	26	26	16	2	23
	27.96	27.96*	17.20	2.15	24.73
16. COLLEGE ACADEMIC REGULATIONS.	50	22	3	0	14
	56.18*	24.72	3.37	.00	15.73
17. COURSE SELECTION/PROGRAM PLANNING.	59	25	3	0	7
	64.13*	25.00	3.26	.00	7.61
18. COLLEGE PROGRAM INFORMATION.	61	15	4	0	12
	66.30*	16.30	4.35	.00	13.04
19. UNIVERSITY INFORMATION.	46	22	9	3	20

JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE ACADEMIC ADVISING EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICE PROJECT

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

TABLE 3-6

193

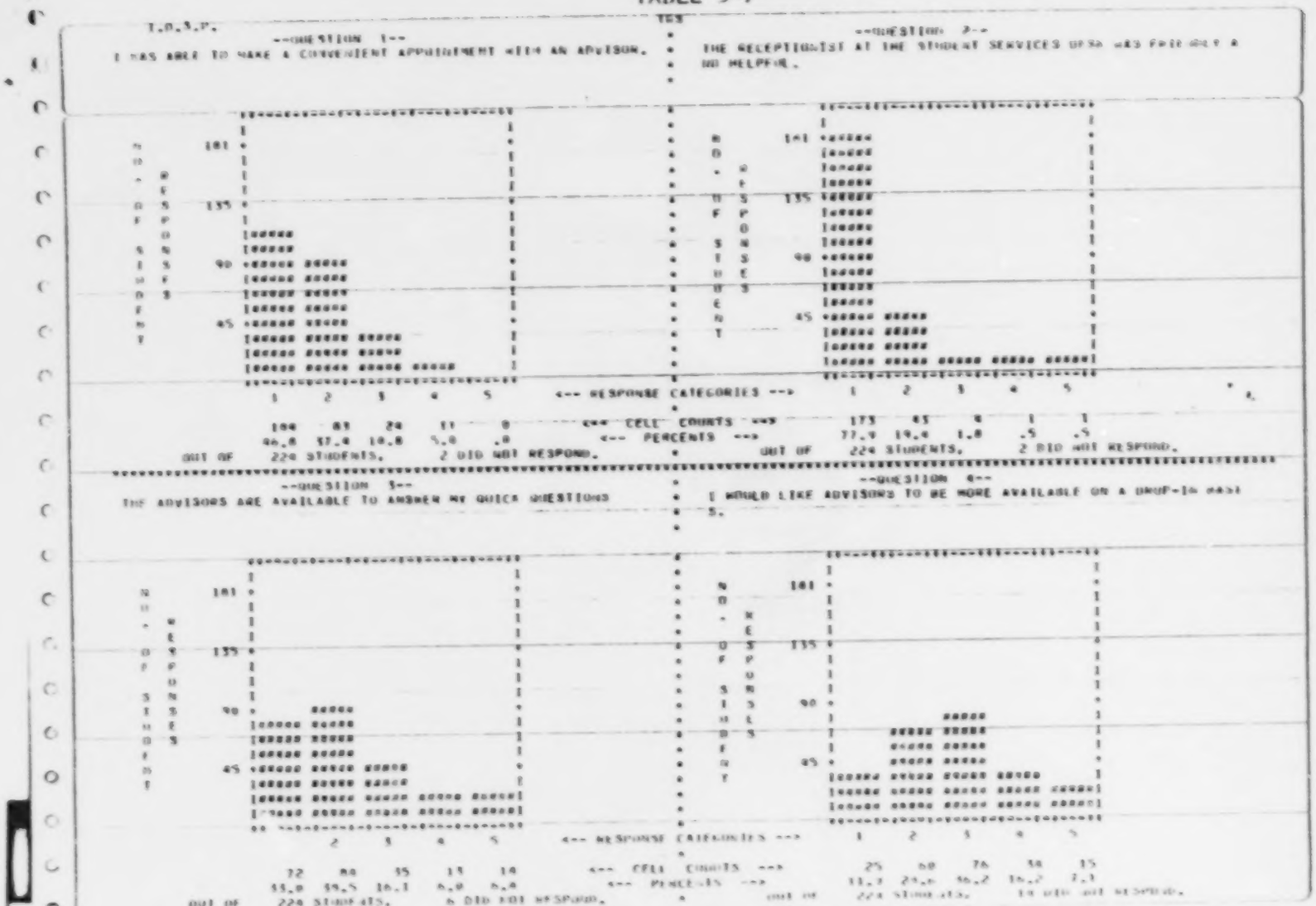
TEACHING SKILLS IN ORDER OF INCREASING ACCURACY OF PREDICTION

ORDER	QN #	QUESTION	PREDICTIONS	RESULTS
1)	1.	I WAS ABLE TO MAKE A CONVENIENT APPOINTMENT WITH AN ADVISOR.	25 51 25	86 12 0
2)	2.	THE RECEPTIONIST AT THE STUDENT SERVICES DESK WAS FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL.	88 50 50	97 2 0
4)	3.	THE ADVISORS ARE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER MY QUICK QUESTIONS	20 51 50	72 19 7
6)	7.	THE ADVISOR WAS FRIENDLY.	51 20 50	96 2 0
5)	5.	A HALF-HOUR APPOINTMENT IS USUALLY SUFFICIENT TIME TO DISCUSS MY QUESTIONS WITH AN ADVISOR.	51 33 20	89 9 0
6)	8.	THE ADVISOR WAS EASY TO TALK WITH.	61 10 50	94 4 0
7)	25.	I FOUND THE JACPACT SERIES HELPFUL AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND.	71 15 15	55 6 37
8)	22.	THE ADVISOR WAS ABLE TO REFER ME TO RESOURCES OUTSIDE THE COLLEGE (I.E. UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS, ADMISSION OFFICERS, ETC.).	71 10 20	29 21 55
9)	20.	CAREER INFORMATION.	75 25	68 16

20.

JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE ACADEMIC ADVISING EVALUATION

TABLE 3-7



INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICE PROJECT

* * * * * GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS * * * * *

TABLE 3-8

N=3

SUMMARY OF SECTION II ---- GENERAL BACKGROUND ITEMS

25. I WOULD RECOMMEND ACADEMIC ADVISING TO MY FRIENDS.

1.	YES	210 =	97.7 PCT
2.	NO	5 =	2.3 PCT

26. WHICH PROGRAM ARE YOU IN?

1.	010 HEALTH OR 020 PURE AND APPLIED	67 =	31.0 PCT
2.	030 SOCIAL SCIENCE OR 040 COMMERCE	94 =	43.5 PCT
3.	050 CREATIVE ARTS OR 060 LITERATURE AND LANGUAGES	19 =	8.8 PCT
4.	TECHNOLOGY: PLEASE NAME	31 =	14.4 PCT
5.	OTHER: PLEASE SPECIFY	9 =	4.2 PCT

27. HOW MANY SEMESTERS HAVE YOU ATTENDED JAC?

1.	ONE	80 =	36.2 PCT
2.	TWO	19 =	8.8 PCT
3.	THREE	77 =	34.6 PCT
4.	FOUR	19 =	8.9 PCT
5.	FIVE OR MORE	39 =	17.6 PCT

CHAPTER 4

REVIEW OF FINDINGS

A. SUMMARY OF STUDENT INFORMATION
B. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
C. ACCESSIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY
D. KNOWLEDGE OF AND ACCESS TO GENERAL INFORMATION

A. STUDENT INFORMATION

The major objective of this survey was to learn if advising was meeting student needs. The researchers wanted to know which students were using the departments' services. Were they pre-university or technology students? What semester were they in? How often did they visit advising and what were they coming to see advisors about?

Of the 449 students surveyed, most were enrolled in pre-university programs, with the majority in Social Science & Commerce (44.1%). Science students were the second largest group to see Advising (31.1%), with Creative Arts and Literature & Language students being only 5.7% of the population surveyed. It was anticipated that pre-university students would represent a majority due to the amount of time Advisors discuss university and career information with students. Technology students represented 15.6% of the students surveyed, while 3.4% represented 'others'.

Most of the students who came to Advising were in their first (39.4%) or third (35.3%) semesters - this was to be expected given that the students surveyed had just completed a Fall semester. Approximately 19.8% of the students had been at John Abbott for 5 or more semesters while 7.2% attended two and 5.3% attended for 4 semesters. This pattern varied amongst the advisors individually. The majority of the students seen last Fall had been to an Advisor at least once (46.9%) while 33.1% had been to advising twice. Approximately 12.5% had seen an Advisor 3 times and 7.3% had been to advising four or more times.

We were extremely surprised and pleased, to learn that 43.2% of the students who came to Advising did so because they read about the service. Academic Advising does absolutely no advertising of its services during the semester so we assume these students must have read about the service in the registration information package, the Daily Info, the Student Services brochure and/or in the college calendar. In the future we wish to ask students what publication(s) they read so as to tap this as a means of putting other information across to students.

The second highest rate of referral came from friends (24.1%). This is an obvious indicator that students talk to each other about advising and that they recommend that their friends use it. In fact, 96.4% of the students surveyed said they would recommend Advising to their friends. The third highest referral (14.9%) came from 'other', however, most students failed to specify what the 'other' source was. Parents, guidance counsellors, Registrar's Office, etc., are some possibilities. It is unfortunate that we were unable to collect more specific data on this topic. Faculty referrals represented 10.3% of the students who saw Advisors while 'other staff' referrals comprised 7.3%.

We were also anxious to know why students came to see Advisors. The variety of possibilities were divided into 3 areas - college, university and career.

Item 5 concerned itself with CEGEP academic information and college policy. The breakdown of reasons for seeing an Advisor were as follows:

1.	CEGEP program information	6.5%
2.	Course selection	25.3%

3.	College Policy	3.2%
4.	Change of Program	26.1%
5.	Two or more of the above.	38.6%

Item 6 asked students to identify the university-related matters about which they needed advice. The results were as follows:

1.	University program information	16.4%
2.	University admission requirements	26 %
3.	University application procedures	2.5%
4.	All of above	54.9%

Of the 449 students surveyed only 273 answered this question resulting in a high rate of no response (36.8%). This surprised Advisors as it was felt that university and career information is discussed with almost every student in some way. However, the data perhaps more accurately reflects the students' intentions for coming to Advising as opposed to the content of the student's interview with the Advisor.

This trend continued in the results for Item 7 which provided a breakdown of career-related information as reasons for seeing an Advisor.

1.	Educational requirements to meet my career goals	33.8%
2.	Job outlook and specific career information	5.6%
3.	Career alternatives	4.1%
4.	Career paths (routes to careers)	11.2%
5.	Two or more of the above	45.1%

Of the 449 students surveyed, almost half (199) did not respond to the question. The results here may be coloured by the students interpretation of the question. For example, if a student sees an Advisor to obtain information which university program would lead to a career as an accountant, does that mean he saw an Advisor for "university program information" or "educational requirements to meet my career goals"? We may wish to re-design these questions to be somewhat more specific - i.e. "Which of these areas did you discuss with your advisor?" and then provide a breakdown of possibilities.

Despite the high rate of non-response in Items 6 and 7, the significant number of students who responded to both questions affirms our belief that students place great emphasis on the link between university programs and career choice.

B. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

In this evaluation of advising services, Advisors wanted to know two things:

a) How did students rate the quality of information they received?

b) How did they rate the Advisor's interpersonal skills?

Most of the advisors felt they had excellent knowledge of college and university information, but were particularly keen to learn how students perceived them on a more personal level as people. American education journals have documented that the quality of the advisor-advisee relationship determines the quality of the advising service. We feel confident that we provide an excellent service but do students agree?

In developing the inter-personal skills section of the evaluation, the researchers had minimal reference material to provide guidelines. As a result, the researchers were left to their own devices in creating the questions for this part of the survey.

Before determining what questions to ask, we had to define what we meant by interpersonal skills and identify the qualities of an 'excellent' Advisor. It was concluded that listening and communication skills were essential as was the ability to care about and take interest in the individual student. The Advising Department has always regarded itself as one which maintains an interest in students and the quality of their stay at John Abbott College. The researchers identified skills they believed contribute to the quality of the advisor-advisee relationship and asked students to rate their experience in each of the following areas:

1. The Advisor was on time for my appointment.
2. The Advisor was friendly.
3. The Advisor was easy to talk with.
4. The Advisor demonstrated an interest in me and my particular situation.
5. The Advisor was a good listener.
6. The Advisor explained things clearly and was easy to understand.
7. The Advisor did not seem rushed and had time to spend with me.
8. The Advisor encouraged and helped me towards my career and educational goals.
9. The Advisor was successful in helping me to improve my academic performance.
10. The Advisor had a sense of humour.

With the exception of items 8, 9 and 10, the department rated itself a 'B' (little improvement needed - generally good) for all items in Section III - Interpersonal Skills. As a group the Advisors feel that their interpersonal skills are effective but that there is <u>always</u> room for improvement. It was found that the Advisors generally tended to underestimate themselves in comparison to the students. The majority of the students questioned rated the department an 'A' (no improvement needed - very good to excellent). The following is an account of the specific results of this section of the survey, with suggestions for improvement and recommendations where appropriate.

Item I asked students to rate their Advisor's punctuality. The department gave itself a B (little improvement needed) and predicted that 90% of the students surveyed would find that little or no improvement was needed. Advisors were pleased to learn that students actually gave them an 'A' - very good to excellent - and that % agreed with the prediction that no improvement is needed. We work hard to be punctual for appointments and try to prevent students from waiting unnecessarily. It seems that we've been successful in this area.

Item 2 asked students to evaluate the friendliness of their Advisor. The Advisors felt that on average, given all times of the day, they were a B (generally good) and that 95% of the students would find little or no improvement necessary. Only 15.1% agreed with a B rating while 81% identified the department as A (very good to excellent). A total of 96.1% said little or no improvement was necessary for item 2 which was slightly above the departments' prediction of 95%. It is reassuring to know that students find Advisors friendly and therefore approachable - a factor which must in some way account for the high rate of return visits to Academic Advising (see section on Student Information).

We predicted that 95% of the students would find little or no improvement necessary for Item 3 - 'the Advisor was easy to talk with'. Our predictions were almost 100% accurate; 95.2% agreed. However, only 20% agreed that we were a 'B', generally good, 74.8% rated us an 'A', very good to excellent. Again we were pleased to learn that students felt comfortable talking with us - an essential basis for developing a good advisor-advisee rapport.

The vast majority of students felt that Advisors were interested in them as individuals (Item 4). Given the high number of students seen by just five professionals, the Advisors believed they could improve in this area and so rated the department B (generally good). Thirty percent of the students agreed. Almost seventy percent said A (very good to excellent). It was predicted that 90% of the students would say there was little or no room for improvement - 87.6% agreed. While 9.5% stated that improvement was required - (the prediction was 10%).

All the Advisors felt that listening skills could be improved and rated the department as a 'B', generally good (Item 5). Only 22.7% agreed with the department's B rating. Most (70%) rated listening skills as A (very good to excellent). It was predicted 90% of the students would say that little or no improvement was required and in fact 92.6% responded as such. Only 4.8% said the department needed improvement in listening skills. Despite the positive feedback from students, Advisors would like to obtain additional expertise in interviewing skills and are looking into possibilities for this in the coming semesters.

Despite the complexity of material which Advisors deal with on a daily basis, students found that Advisors explain things clearly and were easy to understand in an interview situation (Item 6) The department rated itself a 'B' on this item believing there are times when Advisors could be more clear and concise. Almost 60% said Advisors were A (very good to excellent) in this area while 32.2% said generally good. Advisors predicted that 90% would say little or no improvement is required. Our prediction was almost accurate - 89.4% agreed.

The results for Item 7 - the advisor did not seem rushed - surprised Advisors somewhat although their predictions were in fact quite accurate. Because of heavy demands on the service during the Fall of 1983 semester and large numbers of students waiting to see Advisors during drop-in periods, many Advisors felt rushed and not able to spend as much time with students as they would have liked. We rated outselves a 'B' on this item and 31.8% agreed that we needed a little improvement while 55% said no improvement was required. Eleven percent said that considerable improvement was needed. (N.B. Advisors are taking a look at what can be done to improve this.)

Item 8 - The Advisor encouraged and helped me towards my career and educational goals - was of considerable interest to the department. It was very difficult to predict how students would respond. One of the tasks an Advisor hopes to accomplish is to help students make the best decision possible given all factors and show them where and how to obtain the necessary information for making those decisions. An Advisor will frequently encourage students to consider alternatives or modify their goals due to academic or personal considerations, e.g. poor grades, unrealistic goals, lack of information and research. As a result, the student may regard the Advisor as not encouraging and not helping. After much discussion, the Advising department concluded it was 'B' (generally good) in encouraging students but that realistically it probably did not 'help' students towards their goals. Thirty five percent rated the department a 'B' while 33% rated Advisors as A (very good to excellent).

The department could not decide how students would respond. We even questioned the appropriateness of this item, and predicted that 100% would say that item 8 was unnecessary. In fact, only 12.2% found this item inapplicable while 24 students did not even respond to the question, increasing the percentage slightly. Sixty eight percent of the students surveyed said little or no improvement is needed in the area.

Item 9 created much discussion when trying to decide a group rating for 'helping me to improve my academic performance'. Advisors wondered if the word 'help' was appropriate in reference to an Advisor's effect on improving academic performance. It was concluded that Advisors probably don't have much direct effect on improving a student's academic performance and so rated the department a 'C' (considerable improvement needed). Thirteen percent gave us the same rating while as many as 33.8% said this was not a necessary skill. In addition, there was a significant number of students who did not respond to the question which leads the researchers to believe that a somewhat larger proportion of the student sample regarded this item as not applicable to their experience in advising.

Item 10 - 'the advisor had a sense of humour' - provoked an interesting response from our students. When formulating the questionnaire the researchers throught that having a sense of humour was indeed helpful in advising. Believing we all have a fairly good sense of humour, we rated ourselves a B - generally good. We predicted that 90% of our students would say that little or no improvement was needed - 60.9% agreed. Nineteen percent said some or considerable improvement was needed, while 14.6% said it was an unnecessary skill. While humour probably makes the job easier to cope with on a day-to-day basis, it doesn't have to be a criterion

for excellence in advising. In retrospect, we would not include this as a question in our next evaluation because humour does not necessarily make an Advisor's interpersonal skills more effective although it may help one to appear more approachable.

C. ACCESSIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF ADVISORS

An important component of this evaluation is to find out how effective the academic advising appointment system is in meeting student needs. A series of six questions was designed to evaluate the accessibility and availability of advisors.

1. I was able to make a convenient appointment with an advisor.

The vast majority (80%) of the respondents were pleased with the convenience of their appointments. Only 8.12% felt that there was room for improvement (variables C & D).

The advising team had rated their appointment availability as mediocre (C). After discussion, it was concluded that the advisors did not correctly interpret this question. Instead of thinking in terms of sheer convenience, advisors were reacting to the phenomenon of an overwhelming demand on the service, such that hundreds of students were turned away without being given appointments in the two month period prior to the in-putting of advisors self-evaluation and student predictions. Upon closer study and reflection, the advisors agreed that if a student was able to make an appointment, then it was scheduled to fit into the student's timetable. This survey deals only with those students who were successful in obtaining an appointment with an advisor. However, when the advisors indicated their prediction of student response, they were fairly accurate.

RESPONSE VARIABLE	ADVISOR'S PREDICTION	STUDENT RESPONSE
A & B	90%	81.2%
C & D	10%	18 %
E	0%	.5%

2. The receptionist at the student services desk was friendly and helpful.

The advisors evaluated the receptionist at very good to excellent (A). This is precisely how students reacted, approximately 76.5% as A and 19.5% as B with small numbers suggesting room for improvement. It was felt that individual advisors were somewhat more critical on their own evaluations, and had rated the receptionist as a B. This was influenced by factors such as replacement staff at the reception desk and the feeling that students may have deflected their frustrations for the lack of advising appointments on the receptionist.

3. The Advisors are available to answer my quick questions.

This is one aspect of accessibility, where advisors significantly underestimated their availability. In rating their own score, the advisors gave the group a score of C which was common to only 16.4% of the student ratings. The students were actually quite pleased with 70.5% responding A & B.

The academic advising department has a rather rigid appointment booking

system. The receptionist screens all requests for appointments to ensure that the student is eligible for an appointment within time frames identified as priority to certain types of appointments (i.e. Change of Program, Graduating Students, University bound...) There were limited time blocks available for students with quick questions to drop-in (see next question). Students who had previously seen an advisor may have been encouraged to drop-in with questions or to follow-up with an advisor. Students trying to initiate a first contact on their own may experience problems in getting to see an advisor. Physically, the student must get past the receptionist's desk to have access to the advising offices.

The receptionist provices an excellent front-line resource to respond to students' quick questions within her area of expertise. The receptionist can often establish the nature of the problem and can ensure that urgent questions are handled immediately. Advisors make themselves available in cases of referral and phone calls.

The overwhelming feeling that the service was taxed during the last year, had given the advisors the impression that they were not meeting the needs of the majority of the students.

4. I would like advisors to be more available on a drop-in basis.

Unlike the previous item, the advisors were fairly accurate in predicting student response on this variable. The advisors themselves were not

satisfied with their performance and had rated themselves as mediocre (C) anticipating a 40% student response in A & B and a 60% student response in C & D. However, they knew not all students would react this way. In fact, 41.2% were extremely positive (A & B), a significant 33.05% felt that improvement was needed (c), also approximately 15% felt considerable improvement was needed (D). This is one of the few areas where significant negative ratings occurred. Very specific recommendations will be made to better this situation, as described later in this report. This is reinforced by the fact that a significant number of the open comments submitted reflected the need to improve advising availability.

5. A half-hour appointment is usually sufficient time to discuss my question with an advisor.

6. The advisor was on time for my appointment.

The advising group was accurate in assessing its performance on both these items. Although advising modestly rated itself as B, a significantly higher proportion of students rated advising as A, 56% (Q.5) 64% (Q.6). Close to 86% to 90% were pleased with these components of the service.

Advisors feel that half-hour long appointments work extremely well. Students are happy to return for another interview should this be required. The fairly rigid appointment schedule does ensure punctuality.

D. KNOWLEDGE OF AND ACCESS TO GENERAL INFORMATION

Rating of advisors' knowledge of and access to certain areas will depend upon the nature of the students' reasons for making the appointments. Some appointments cover a wide range of topics, others are limited to specific issues. The reasons why students made appointments are covered in questions 5, 6, 7 within the data on student background information.

1. College Academic Regulation

These regulations include such items as course load policy, withdrawals, registration policies and procedures. Advisors somewhat overestimated at 90%, when students actually had a response rate of approximately 82% for answers A and B. The discrepancy is due to the fact that approximately 14% of the students found the question not applicable (E) and an additional 10% did not respond at all. This would indicate that a significant proportion of the students did not cover this topic in their interviews. However, the advising team neglected to take this into account when loading their student predictions.

2. Course selection/program planning.

There was a similar response pattern here as in the previous item. The advisors were slightly more accurate, only because fewer students 6% rated themselves within the non-applicable category (E) and only 7% did not respond to the question. This is related to the fact that under question 6 in Student Information Section, 25% came to advising for this sole purpose.

3. College program information.

Advisors were slightly more positive in their response (A and B), but again they neglected to consider a significant number (12% of students in category E and an additional 7.5%) who did not respond. (Within the Student Information Section - Question 6, it was found that only 6.5% named this as a sole reason for coming to advising).
The last three items relate directly to question 6 within the Student Information section and these findings should be considered here.

4. University Information

Advisors spend a significant amount of their time discussing universities with students. 80% of John Abbott students are following pre-university programs so that throughout their stay at the college they are working at making decisions re: university. Advisors find this to be a fairly complex task and the individual advisor must absorb a lot of information on the Canadian university system. However, in a Fall semester when there are 2000 new students (4600 total student population) and 36.5% of the students surveyed in this study are in their first semester, university information is not of immediate concern. As a matter of fact, approximately 54% of the students did not answer question 7 in the Student Information Section which would indicate university information was not applicable to them during their advising appointments in Fall of 1983.

In addition, about 15% of the students were in technology programs (Question 1 - Student Information Section) where they are less likely to be concerned about

university information. Therefore, advisors overestimated their predictions such that this item was rated as the sixth least accurate prediction. Fortunately, the students who did respond were pleased with the service 69% (A & B), yet 17% were not applicable (E) and an additional 11.5% did not respond. Again, advisors were reacting in global terms of their tasks rather than in relation to the types of students they saw during the Fall 1983 term, thus their prediction was inaccurate.

5. Career Information

From the perspective of an advisor, career information is becoming more vital yet more complex. Advisors do not feel that they have successfully mastered the career information scene as easily as they have the university scene. This is due to the complexity and dramatic rate of change in the former. As such, the advisors only rated their performance as C - (Mediocre) and predicted that 40% of students would rate them as A & B - little or no improvement and 60% as C & D - some or considerable improvement.

Once again, it turned out that advisors underestimeated their performance such that 26.6% no improvement (A), and 33% as some improvement needed (B). About 13% agreed with the advising self-evaluation of mediocre/improvement needed.

The area overlooked by advisors was the significant number of students who found the item non-applicable (24%) combined with the fact that 58 students

or 14% did not respond on this item. This relates back to question 7 in the Student Information section.

6. The Advisor was able to refer me to resources within the college.

Advisors feel that they are fairly successful on this item and rated their performance as A - very good to excellent. A significant proportion of students agreed with this 48% (A) and another 25.5% responded (B) generally good. 7.81% rated advising as mediocre and only 1.2% felt considerable improvement was needed. However, a very significant number 16.5% did not find that this item was applicable, in addition to another 12.5% did not respond.

Again, we have a situation where advising's prediction of student response was 90% (A & B) 10% (C & D) and 0% in (E). It has become a pattern that advisors totally disregarded the relevance of category E (not applicable). In discussing this particular finding, advisors did agree that a significant number of students are not actually referred elsewhere or may not interpret being sent to registrar's office to drop off forms or to stop into the College and Career Shop as a direct referral from advising. Students may have already been introduced to these services prior to meeting with an advisor.

7. The advisor was able to refer me to resources outside the college.

Unlike the previous item, advisors did not feel that they as readily referred students to outside resources for several reasons: (1) advisors

have more limited contacts with outside institutions, (2) it is usually only second year students with particular questions for university representative who would be referred (only a small proportion would actually follow up on the referral), (3) there would be a small number who would be referred to other CEGEPs, and (4) those referred to outside individuals and/or institutions for career info.

The advisors did feel these factors would restrict the number of students who would find the statement applicable. So that they stated that 30% would find it not applicable. A very high proportion of students did not find it applicable 36.5% as well as close to 20% who did not respond. This is one of the highest indications that this component of the service does not apply to a significant proportion of advising clients.

For the students who did find the item relevant, students agreed with advisors that they were B - generally good (advising's own assessment) 20.4%, as well as another 20% who were even more positive - A - (excellent). Unfortunately, 17% found this aspect of the service to be mediocre (C) but only 4% found it to be generally poor (D).

8. I found the JACFACT series helpful and easy to understand.

JACFACTs are a series of information sheets which summarize different types of university information (How to Apply Successfully to University, Maritime Universities, Engineering Programs, etc) compiled and written by academic advisors.

Having found a limited clientele for referrals to outside resources, it is not surprising that few students found a referral to a brochure kept in the College and Career Shop to be relevant. Certainly, JACFACTs are not handed out to every student who sees an advisor. In addition, students may not have been familiar with the term "JACFACT".

Advisors did make some allowance for the non-applicability of this item, and thus predicted that 30% of the students would rate it as E "not applicable". But advisors maintained that of those who used it 70% would have found it good (A & B). Students actually responded 17% -A, excellent, and 26% - B, generally good, yet only 6.5% found it C -mediocre, and less than 1% found it to be poor. Advisors did underestimate the non-applicable answers of 48%, which is extremely high when combined with a high non-response rate of 25.5%.

Although students were not particularly negative in their ratings, it does seem that this item might be withdrawn or incorporated into another, as it was found to be irrelevant to such a large proportion of the students.

9. I was able to find the information I needed and wanted in the College and Career Shop.

Again, this is a category which is not likely to apply to all of the students seen by advisors. Those students interested in university/college/career information are all encouraged (at some point) to do research in the

College and Career Shop. In the Fall semester, a fairly large proportion 36.2% are first semester students who are usually not ready to do this kind of research, but are more involved with course selection and college policies. As such, Advisors should have anticipated a significant not applicable (E) response, which was 22%, as well as an additional 13% who did not respond. (0% was advising prediction). Advisors rated the performance at B - generally good, which actually represented 33% of the student response, as well as 29% excellent rating of #A although 12% rated this item as C mediocre. Only about 3% rated it as D - generally poor.

Advisors had rated the Shop as B, because they felt that not all of the information was readily accessible or easy to find without the help of the library technician. At peak periods during the semester, individualized assistance was a luxury not available to all students. In addition, there is the tendency for a certain type of student to seek "instant" answers rather than research several volumes for an answer to a query.

This type of item may need to be re-thought or perhaps restricted to a certain category of student. It may not be appropriate to ask questions about an ancillary service in an advising evaluation.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

A. METHODOLOGY

B. ADAPTATION OF TABS

C. REVIEW OF FINDINGS

- C.1 Summary of Student Information
- C.2 Interpersonal Skills
- C.3 Acce-sibility and Availability
- C.4 Knowledge of and Access to General Information

CONCLUSION

A. METHODOLOGY

The methods utilized and the critical path of this study proved to be effective. The close-ended questions allowed for a clear and concise report of findings. The format of questions was compatable with that of TABS/TRS. Considering the limitations of a mailed questionnaire, we were very pleased with the high return rate (over 50%) and with the quality of completed questionnaires.

The various steps in the project were easily incorporated into the department's work-load throughout the year. The most time-consuming components were:

A. the meetings to interpret and discuss the computerized findings (both individual and group)

B. the somewhat tedious task of two people assembling a report

It is recommended that:

1. A more in-depth survey of literature be undertaken to look at tools used in evaluation and trends existing in studies evaluating professional services.
2. Should a second study be undertaken, the same methodology and critical path be followed to allow for a closely matched project. This will ensure compatability of the subject matter.

3. The study incorporate a further refinement of the open ended comment section. This could be accomplished by requesting comment on specific topics or questions, or the coupling of comments with each close-ended question.
4. The structure and phrasing of several questions be revised to clarify the intended meaning from a student point of view.
5. Those questions dealing with ancillary services (JACFACTs, College and Career Shop) be removed from the evaluation of academic advising services.
6. The study incorporate questions to find out if the students actually followed up on the advice outlined by the advisor.
7. An attempt be made to adjust the individual advising evaluations to compensate for the fact that students may see several advisors, or in some cases may not know which advisor they have seen, or students may confuse advisors with counsellors.

B. ADAPTATION OF TABS/TRS

The TABS/TRS questionnaire was readily available at John Abbott College for use by the non-computer specialist. Taking into consideration the basic differences in subject - the professional advising department versus the individual classroom teacher, the researchers proceeded to utilize TABS/TRS on the basis of excellent feedback from practicioners in the field. No scientific analysis of validity and reliability was undertaken.

The researchers were cognisant of the fact that they were borrowing an instrument that was designed to be just one of several components of a teaching improvement process to be used with a consultant.

This tool proved to be more than adequate in measuring academic advising's effectiveness. In fact, the presentation of findings was more sophisticated than we had anticipated. As has been noted throughout this report, advisors were not always aware of the implications of their own interpretation of questions and the effect on predicted outcomes. It has been pointed out that category E "non-applicable" was not properly utilized.

The advisors also had some difficulties keeping the notion of self-evaluation separate from student prediction and as a result tended to think in terms of how students saw them.

All of the advisors enjoyed the process of interacting on the computer and needed only a short time to input their data.

Once the computerized findings were generated, it became necessary to consult a specialist to find out how to interpret and read the sophisticated printouts. When individual scores were compared to group results, it was found that identical trends existed. The variety of formats met the needs of all, both from an individual perspective and that of the researcher compiling a report.

We thus conclude that TABS/TRS is adaptable to a group evaluation of the non-teaching professional and provides a comprehensive analysis of data.

It is recommended that:

1. Future studies utilize the order and numbering outlined in TABS/TRS to avoid possible confusion.
2. The college's program specifications increase the maximum number of evaluations for computer analysis to at least 500.
3. The preamble or introduction of TABS become more concise to avoid user impatience (largely with the instructions about creating a questionnaire when one wants to input self-assessments and student predictions)
4. The differentiation between self-evaluation and student prediction be re-inforced through the use of examples, so as to avoid confusing the two.
5. A special set of instructions be included to make the user more aware of the use and importance of the "non-applicable" category and its effect on accuracy of prediction.
6. A research of literature be undertaken to find out why certain types of individuals are prone to underestimate their performance.
7. The researchers contact the authors of TABS to get more information on the history and development of TABS.

C. REVIEW OF FINDINGS

C.1 Summary of Student Information

The Academic Advisors had a good idea of which students were using the services, as statistics are gathered on an annual basis. However, it was important to have a profile of the students who were surveyed so as to know what implications that information might have for the evaluation.

It was anticipated that the majority of students seen would be pre-university students and this proved to be true. A major part of the service offered by Academic Advising lies in providing assistance and guidance with matters concerning course selection, university and/or career information. Because most students see Advisors about one or a combination of these items - see section entitled General Information - it would seem reasonable to assume that it is the pre-university student looking for this information. Pre-university students, with perhaps more complex decision-making, are supposed to need more assistance, while the technology students have made their decisions prior to entering CEGEP.

Three points surfaced in this section which rather surprised the Advising team. The first, being that such a large number of students - 43.2% - read about academic advising services before coming to the department. The second being the high rate of non-response 36 % in Item 8 and the third being the

high rate of non-response in Item 9. It did not occur to the researchers that there would be such a large portion of the student's surveyed for whom these questions would not apply. As stated earlier, the high rate of non-response may have been due to student interpretation of what the question meant. We suspect that students responded to the item giving consideration to their intentions for seeing an Advisor as opposed to whether or not other areas were discussed during the interview.

It is interesting to note that the results for Items 8 and 9 support the trend that students have towards linking university programs with career goals and job opportunities.

The format of this section of the evaluation worked well. It provided the researchers with the information they needed and gave an overview of the students completing the survey. For future reference, it is recommended that:

a) space be provided to identify sources of referral if referral was 'other'

b) space be provided to students who are 'others' to identify who they are ie non-JAC, Adult Learner, staff, etc.

c) opportunity for student to use "not applicable" category in Section I, Items 5, 6 & 7

d) questions/categories could be constructed to reflect content of the Advising interview as opposed to students reasons for making appointments.
ie which areas did you discuss with your Advisor?

e) complete correlation with Section IV (Student Information) items 1 - 5 inclusive, and Section III (Interpersonal Skills) items 8 and 9

C.2 Interpersonal Skills

This section of the evaluation provided some interesting information for Advisors and was fairly effective in providing feedback for areas of strengths and those requiring improvement.

Because of the heavy demand on Advising services in the Fall 83 semester, Advisors often felt rushed and not able to spend as much time with students as they would've liked. As a result, Advisors frequently under-rated themselves particularly items 2, 4 and 7. While students gave Advisors positive ratings in this area, the comments in Section V (Appendix B) of the evaluation support the feeling that Advisors were frequently rushed.

Section V General Comments, where students were free to add whatever comments they wanted to make about the service, was very helpful in sensitizing Advisors to several phenomena that occur within the advising interview.

An example of this is the Advisor may unconsciously use vocabulary that is meaningless to the student. Advisors often use the term 'major' or 'minor' in reference to university programs. Students may have no idea what these terms mean. One student commented:

> The Advisor assumes that you understand the basic idea of "how" and "what to achieve" in University, but in fact, the student does not.
>
> (Appendix B)

The Advisors need to remember that the information with which they work on a daily basis may often seem confusing and unwieldy for the student. Determining exactly how much the student does or doesn't know would be helpful to avoid this in the future.

In addition to determining how much a student knows, it would seem that there is a need to clarify with students that the advice and/or information given by an Advisor, depends on what the student asks or tells the Advisor about him or herself. A number of students commented that they received conflicting advice from advisors:

> Two students with same questions have gotten totally different advice or guidance. Leads to uncertainty and dissatisfaction of not knowing all options.
>
> ... I have been to two advisors on the same subject both suggesting totally different things! Let's be a little more consistent!
>
> (Appendix B)

Although Advising does feel that there is consistency in its information to students, perhaps more can be done to determine what a student's initial expectations are of the Advisor. Students with the same question may, in fact, receive totally different advice, depending on each students' individual situation. It is for this reason that students are always encouraged to see an Advisor rather than rely on a friend "who has exactly the same problem". Being sensitive to student expectations can help the Advisor to interview more effectively and therefore to increase student satisfaction.

In general, Section V helped to support the positive rating students gave Advisors:

> I find that the department produces a warmth and that is felt when one enters the office. This is when it is needed most.
>
> Very helpful, I would be lost without them.
>
> I find John Abbott's Academic Advising facilities extremely well equipped with helpful, current academic reference material as well as competent well informed advisors, who seem keenly interested in helping each student to the fullest of his/her capabilities.
>
> In such a large institution, it's comforting to know that the advisors have the time to see each student and help him/her on an individual basis. Keep up the good work!!
>
> (Appendix B)

These comments and others support the belief that the <u>quality</u> of interpersonal skills - listening, caring, communicating - is an essential factor in providing an excellent advising service to students.

It is recommended that:

1) Item 10 of Section III 'the Advisor had a sense of humour' be eliminated from the Evaluation.

2) Item 8 be re-worded to eliminate the word 'help'. We may wish to develop this further to include "The Advisor helped me consider alternatives etc. to my career and/or educational goals". More thought must be given to determine what information is desired from this question.

3) Item 9 should be reworded to reflect the actual role of Advising in this area or perhaps eliminated entirely. Advisors concluded that they do not 'help' in improving academic performance but do 'encourage' improvement which may change a student's attitude and hence improve performance. Also, referrals are made to sources of help such as the Learning Skills Centre, resource centres, teachers and other professionals.

4) Students opting to use the 15 minute appointment or drop-in times to see an Advisor, for change of program or university application information, must be carefully screened to verify that their questions can be handled in a short interview. The receptionist should inform students of the nature of the 'quicky' interview so as to avoid dissatisfaction if the student is asked to return for priority appointment at a later date.

5) That not more than 8 to 10 students be seen in a 2 hour drop-in period. Drop-in students with more complex questions and concerns would be given priority for a regular ½ hour appointment if asked to return.

6) Advisors should avoid seeing 6 students in consecutive ½ hour appointments and should introduce a ½ hour time block halfway through to complete paperwork, make phone calls and do follow-up work.

(Items 4 through 6 are recommendations to help advisors feel less rushed.)

7) Professional development be available to assist Advisors in further development of expertise in interviewing skills.

8) Professional development be pursued to increase knowledge of student development theories, which would enhance approaches to working with students and therefore increase effectiveness of interpersonal skills.

9) Research, through other literature, possible reasons for under-rating Advisors self-evaluations.

10) Greater use of open-ended questions to provide additional information on students' perspective of advising services. Asking for specifics would be more valuable - student has to qualify their rating.

11) Continued development of computer-assisted advising to expedite information availability and facilitate paperwork so as to provide Advisors more quality time to spend with students.

C.3 Accessibility and Availability

Students were much more positive about the accessibility and availability of advisors than the advisors had anticipated.

In reviewing the reasons for this phenomenon, it was concluded that the advisors were pre-occupied with the fact that the service had turned away 500 students in the Fall '83 semester due to limited appointments and heavy student demand. Because of this, Advisors felt they were not meeting the needs of the majority of the student population. In fact, the respondants were those who had been successful in obtaining appointments.

The study confirmed that students received convenient appointments; that the half-hour appointment is sufficient and advisors are on time for their appointments. These facts coupled with the extremely high satisfaction with the receptionist lead us to believe that the advising appointment system works well to meet student needs.

The two questions dealing with the availability to have quick questions answered and to be available on a drop-in basis need to be more clearly delineated. Although the responses were largely positive, significant percentages of students felt that this was an area for improvement. The comment section of the study reinforces the finding that appointments are difficult to obtain and highlights this as a major area for improvement.

(see Appendix B)

It is recommended that:

1. The notion of "convenience" needs to be more clearly delineated from "availability" of appointments.
2. The notion of availability "to answer quick questions" and "on drop-in basis" needs to be clarified.
3. The department look at ways to increase and improve availability to students (more drop-in times, how appointments are structures late, early, etc)
4. The study incorporate a section to allow students to make suggestions as to how they would see advisors' availability being improved
5. Advisors do their predictions and self-evaluations on the basis of who they actually see during the term, not on the basis of those turned away.

C.4 Knowledge of and Access to General Information

Students indicated positive ratings of advisors on their knowledge of topics listed in this section. Two interesting trends occured in how advisors rated themselves and what the advisors anticipated as student predictions. Firstly, advisors seemed to be operating from a global perspective on how they have developed their knowledge vis-a-vis their entire past experiences with students, without carefully considering just which students they saw for what purposed in the Fall semester of 1983. Not all of these students came about university information, not all students needed career information, not everyone was referred to other resources. Secondly, the advisors totally disregarded the E response "Not Applicable". This greatly distorted their accuracy of prediction because significant numbers of students rated themselves in this category, as well as an additional number who chose not to respond at all.

The questions which proved to be least applicable to significant numbers of students were those that dealt with referrals and ancillary services. (College and Career Shop and JACFACTS).

It is recommended that:

1. Throughout the self-assessment and particularly the student prediction exercise, advisors keep in mind the number of students who may fall into the E "non-applicable" category to avoid distortion of their predictions versus students' responses.

2. Questions may be better structured so that only those students to whom the item applies may proceed to answer the question.
3. The analysis incorporate a correlation between items in this section with those in those in the Student Background Information section.
4. Review the notion and process of referring students to other resources, and consider how this should be handled within the evaluation.
5. Drop the question on JACFACTS.
6. Remove the questions relating to ancillary services such as College and Career Shop.
7. The College and Career Shop should have a separate evaluation which could be included in the advising mailing.

CONCLUSION

The researchers conclude that the objectives of this study were met. We had questions; we got answers. While there are improvements to be made to increase validity and reliability - see Chapter 4 - there is no doubt that this questionnaire was successful in evaluating the Academic Advising Services at John Abbott College for the Fall 1983 semester.

The format and methodology implemented by the researchers marked well and provided an effective means of calculating the necessary data. In future studies, questions will be re-developed to gather student evaluation of areas not covered in this questionnaire. In addition, there will be an increase in the use of open-ended questions to allow students greater opportunity for comments.

The single most important factor which made this research such a positive experience for all involved, was the tremendous enthusiasm and eagerness of the Advisors to participate. At no time did anyone feel uncomfortable with the notion of evaluation. In fact, all the Advisors openly shared their individual evaluations with each other in an attempt to identify departmental strengths and weaknesses. This project would never have been the valuable learning experience that it was if it was not for the Advisors' commitment to this evaluation.

The process of evaluation used in this project also proved to be an excellent tool for professional development and awareness. It caused the Advisors to think in concrete, objective terms about the notion of what excellence in advising services means and what it takes to provide it.

It provided an opportunity for Advisors to sit down and talk about how each individual handles the variety of roles that each Advisor plays; the differences therein and how to improve. It provided information for future planning to increase accessibility through improved administrative organization as well as having already spurned projects for professional development in the areas of student development theory; advising the undecided student and interviewing skills.

The evaluation of academic advising was also successful in confirming that John Abbott Advisors provide a quality service and that, despite changes within, our student population in the last 5 years, the service is meeting student needs. Advising services are well-used and needed by the students evaluated. The task at hand now is to look at how to increase advising effectiveness through some of the suggestions outlined in Chapter 5. The researchers recommend that a second evaluation be conducted next year to look at how these changes may have improved advising services.

The researchers would like to thank the Academic Advisors for their enthusiasm, and eager participation in this project. We would also like to thank Denise Demers Bourgeois of Faculty Professional Development Services and Eadoin Elliott of Management Information Systems for their assistance in conducting the evaluation. Certainly not least, our thanks to the Research and Development Committee for providing the funds to conduct this research and for supporting our belief that evaluation is our essential step in providing an excellent academic advising service.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE

ACADEMIC ADVISING DEPARTMENT

STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF ADVISING SERVICES

The Academic Advisors are seeking feedback from students to help them better identify and meet the needs of the student body at John Abbott.

This questionnaire is the means by which we will gather data to obtain a clear understanding of how students assess the services presently offered by the Academic Advising Department. Your cooperation is needed to make this a success.

You are asked to repond honestly to each of the multiple choice questions presented. You may indicate your answer directly on the questionnaire by circling your answer. If the question does not apply to you, please leave it blank.

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE INCLUDED. WE NEED THIS INFO TO MAXIMIZE OUR SERVICES TO YOU.

This questionnaire is an adaptation of the Teaching Analysis by Students (TABS), designed and developed by the clinic to improve university teaching at the School of Education of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

STUDENT DATA

1. Which program are you in?

a) 010 Health or 020 Pure & Applied
b) 030 Social Science or 040 Commerce
c) 050 Creative Arts or 060 Literature & Languages
d) Technology: please name _____
e) Other: please specify _____

2. How many semesters have you attended JAC?

a) one
b) two
c) three
d) four
e) five or more

3. How many times did you see an advisor this year by appointment in his/her office?

a) one
b) two
c) three
d) four or more

4. Were you referred to Academic Advising by

a) friends (fellow students)
b) faculty
c) other staff
d) read about the service
e) other, please specify _____

5. Did you make an appointment with an advisor to discuss any of the following? (Choose one).

a) CEGEP program information
b) course selection
c) college policy
d) change of program
e) two or more of the above

6. Did you make an appointment with an advisor to discuss any of the following? (Choose one).

a) university program information
b) university admission requirements
c) university application procedures
d) all of the above

7. Did you make an appointment with an advisor to discuss any of the following? (Choose one).

a) educational requirements to meet my career goals
b) job outlook and specific career information
c) career alternatives
d) career paths (routes to careers)
e) two or more of the above

ACCESSIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF ADVISORS

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU FEEL YOUR ADVISOR OR THE DEPARTMENT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT IN EACH OF THE AREAS LISTED BELOW?

	No Improvement Needed (Very Good to Excellent)	Little Improvement Needed (Generally Good)	Improvement Needed (Mediocre)	Considerable Improvement Needed (Generally Poor)	Not Applicable
1. I was able to make a convenient appointment with an advisor.	A	B	C	D	E
2. The receptionist at the Student Services desk was friendly and helpful.	A	B	C	D	E
3. The Advisors are available to answer my quick questions.	A	B	C	D	E
4. I would like Advisors to be more available on a drop-in basis	A	B	C	D	E
5. A half-hour appointment is usually sufficient time to discuss my questions with an Advisor.	A	B	C	D	E

SECTION III

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

1. The Advisor was on time for my appointment.	A	B	C	D	E
2. The Advisor was friendly.	A	B	C	D	E
3. The Advisor was easy to talk with.	A	B	C	D	E
4. The Advisor has demonstrated an interest in me and my particular situation.	A	B	C	D	E
5. The Advisor was a good listener.	A	B	C	D	E
6. The Advisor explained things clearly and was easy to understand.	A	B	C	D	E
7. The Advisor did not seem rushed and had time to spend with me.	A	B	C	D	E

	A: No Improvement Needed (Very Good to Excellent)	B: Little Improvement Needed (Generally Good)	C: Improvement Needed (Mediocre)	D: Considerable Improvement Needed (Generally Poor)	E: Not Applicable
8. The Advisor encouraged and helped me towards my career and educational goals.	A	B	C	D	E
9. The Advisor was successful in helping me to improve my academic performance.	A	B	C	D	E
10. The Advisor had a sense of humour.	A	B	C	D	E

SECTION IV

GENERAL INFORMATION

RATE YOUR ADVISOR'S KNOWLEDGE OF AND ACCESS TO, THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

1. College academic regulations.	A	B	C	D	E
2. Course selection/program planning.	A	B	C	D	E
3. College Program information.	A	B	C	D	E
4. University information.	A	B	C	D	E
5. Career information.	A	B	C	D	E
6. The Advisor was able to refer me to resources within the college. (i.e. Counselling, College & Career Shop, JACFACTS, etc.)	A	B	C	D	E
7. The Advisor was able to refer me to resources outside the college. (i.e. University professors, admission officers, etc.)	A	B	C	D	E
8. I found the JACFACT Series helpful and easy to understand.	A	B	C	D	E
9. I was able to find the information I needed and wanted in the College and Career Shop.	A	B	C	D	E
10. I would recommend Academic Advising to my friends.	A (Yes)	B (No)			

SECTION V - GENERAL COMMENTS

Please feel free to add your own general opinion.

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

STUDENTS' COMMENTS

- Excellent people!

- I found academic Advising very helpful.

- While I recommend Acad. Advising, I stress to my friends that it will not really help you towards deciding what to do. It seemed almost too academic. The advisor assumes that you understand the basic idea of "how" and "what to achieve" in University, but in fact, the student does not. The frustration of the student's confusion is not lessened by much (after "advising").

- Very good service.

- I find that the department produces a warmth and that is felt when one enters the office. This is when it is needed most.

- I feel academic advising at JAC is very helpful & needs very little improvement if any, everyone is always friendly and so is the atmosphere.

- The college service is very good. I hope it will stay like this.

- Advisors should try to get a little more specific with helping student. i.e. when I was discusing universities the advisor left out a couple of possibilities.

- I've never had any problems or complaint's about the academic advising program in John Abbott.

- I dislike being able to make appointments on Fridays. I would rather have it on first come - first serve during the wk.

- My only comment would be that it is difficult to make appointments and sometimes you have to return several times before being able to make an appointment.

- Generally OK.

- Thanks alot.
  All the services are perfect.

- I feel that "course selection" should be wider ranged and eliminate some of the ridiculous courses & make the good courses more varied.

- Advisors proved very helpful in career planning.

- Since Student Services only take appointments on Friday for the following week, I found it difficult to make an appointment for when I was available.

- OK Dokey!

- I found the advisors I had Anita, Laurie to be very helpful. I wish I would've learned to use the service before I had to (i.e. probation). The only reservation I have is the difficulty my friends and I had making appointments - we were always told to come back at the end of the week (Friday). When we did return we usually found the best appointment times had already been taken. Other than that complaint the academic advising service was very useful and instructive, more students should use it.

- Guidance in the Career Workshop is not well run.

- In general I found that Academic advising proved to be very helpfull, the advisors I saw, were great; very friendly and easy to talk to. Super!! Keep up the good work!!!

- Generally helpful, although seem to be scheduling appointments too close together.

- The Acadmic Advisors should be more availabel for drop-ins. It is sometimes very difficult to get in touch with one. Remember students have classes. Otherwise service is excellent.

- Thru out my stay in JAC I stayed with the same Advisor, she & I got to know each other & that is very helpful, - we had a good rapport.

- I hope you will have some thing similar on teachers because I feel that there are alot things that could be a lot better. Maybe a change of teachers in fine arts programe. Not personal but for the students benefit.

- I think it is a very good idea however I think academic advisors should be more knolagable to the different courses outside John Abbott colage.

- Although I find Academic Advising very helpful, I sometimes wish I could spend more time with an advisor in order to acquire more information concerning career paths and University programs.

- Helped me decide on proper career for me.

- Very helpful, I would be lost without them.

- I feel that the advisor was not as conserned about my problem as I had wished.

- I would be very interested in getting involved in the choice program. I will be stopping by the Academic Department early in the semester.

- There should be more time for drop-in periods. It is difficult to get appointments.

- The library was to noisy to study in; new monthly magazines were difficult or impossible to find.

- I find John Abbott's Academic Avising facilities extremely well equipped with helpful, current academic reference material as well as competent well informed advisors, who seem keenly interested in help each student to the fullest of his/her capabilities.

- The academic department is pretty good.

- General satisfaction with the services offered.

- I find the Academic Advising very good. I never had any problems that could not be worked out. Congrats!

- I found some of the advisors very nice and helpful while others were rude and did not seem to want to help. Instead they seemed to be against me. I think these certain people are also quite arrogant.

- I left many questions out, they were for me to answer as I was there only for exemptions, but at that time my reception was well met and my questions answered.

- What is Jacfact series?

- Very impressed with the quality & friendliness of the service.

- JAC - great academic advising, always there, when needed explaining and misunderstandings - helpful (very)

- I find academic advising very helpful and I'm quite satisfied with the advising staff's work.

- I was VERY disappointed in the academic advising at John Abbott & would never suggest to ANYONE (no matter how desperate they were in anything) to see an advisor.

- My advisor was very nice and helpful. I feel maybe if there was more advisors on hand it would be easier for students to make appointments without being told they're all booked for this week.

- I feel everyone should see an advisor in order to feel ready for university of there college courses.

- The Advisors are friendly, helpful people that give their all to help the students. Their just great.

- I think there's a need for more advisors. we always have to wait at least one week to have an appointment and that is too long for us.

- I know that advisors cannot make up your mind for you, but I feel they are sometimes vague and not specific enough when discussing university objectives....

- My advisor for this semester helped me a lot for my choice of University and I thank her for it.

- I found that my advisor & academic advising wasn't tuned into the policies of the registrar concerning graduating students returning to JAC. I got a run around & am still uncertain about what will happen at my registration.

- All the people who work in the Academic Advising dept are very helpful & friendly people keep up the good work.

- The service in itself requires little modification. However I feel that new students should be encouraged more to discuss course selections for subsequent semesters whether they think they need it or not.

- going to speak to the advisor helped me make decisions about my career, she was a great help.

- I was only there briefly so I didn't discuss much with the advisor so I can't answer those questions.

- Peter is a great Advisor, the second lady I had was rather cold and I felt she was just doing a job that she wanted to get thru.

- The advisors can't help....rate students and it is difficult to get information on career paths.

- Advising was quite good except different advisors gave different info. on university standards and on my chances of getting accepted into certain University programs. I felt that of the three advisors I consulted on my chances of being accepted at university, none of them gave me an accurate assessment.

- I would like to see academic advisors more on a drop in basis especially when University applications are to be written.

- I think these people should learn more about Universities in other parts of Canada and the U.S.A.

- I personally found the overall performance of the academic advisors very good.

- The major problem with Academic Advising is that one must wait too long for an appointment (sometimes over a week).

- I haven't visited the office often, but just recently I needed to talk to an advisor about my career and planning it; unfortuneately the appointments were all taken. There must be some way to get around these problems of appointments.

- I think the College's academic advising program is an excellent one. In such a large institution, it's comforting to know that the advisors have the time to see each student and help him/her on an individual basis. Keep up the good work!!

- They are very good but it is hard to get an appointment with.

- On the whole, an excellent service throughout the year especially concerning graduation and entry to McGill Uni.

- When I was having complications, I went to see an academic advisor, and felt much better afterwards, The problem was solved. I feel that it's a great asset to students, to be able to talk to someone who is willing to help out. Academic Advising is benefitial to anyone, whatever the case may be.

- As you can see I found the system very well organized, and I will refer to it af any further problems occure.

- I found your people excellent but one lady did not seem to know very much about 'The Arts' as a career. Thanx

- A short but pleasant experience.

- I am thankful for the services provided. The college & career shop should have more materials on training for trades in Canada.

- My A.A. was very quick to understand my problem, & knew exactly what she was doing. I was very confused, but she straightened me out.

- After leaving the office I felt I should lower my goals. I wasn't given much support.

- I only wish university applications could be in earlier.

- I had a little clearer understanding of what to gear towards for next semester's registration.

- I find the advisors I have visited were extremely helpful, and made me feel that I was actually getting somewhere once I left the office. Excellent!

- I felt that the service was very good and I hope you keep up the service. It is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

- Two students with same questions have gotten totally different advice or guidance. Leads to uncertainty & dissatisfaction of not knowing all options.

- My advisor was very helpful in all of my diffulty. Good Work...

- Academic Advisors encouraged me to continue trying even when I believed it was impossible. They "cleared" up things for me.

- I find A.A. very good but I think they should be available more for on the spot or last minute questions.

- My Experience has been generally very good, but a misunderstanding of the facts of my academic history if I had not discovered it, might have let to a bad situation. This misunderstanding was a careless mistake & betrayed a certain indifference which I do not think is only to be found in this advisor. The woman, who seems to run the College & Career shop is extremely nice & very helpful.

- I only had a short visit but the receptionist and advisor were both very pleasant and helpful.

- My questions concerning University admissions were unanswered and I was only led in circles.

- The Academic Advising Department is very good and very helpful.

- In my opinion a student is vulnerable to the suggestions of an Advisor, I have been to two advisors on the same subject both suggesting totally different things! Lets be a little more consistant!

- It has its faults, but is generally a good thing to have.

- I found that the "advisor" sorted out my confusion of courses to choose. I would recommend to see an advisor to my friends.

- I went in with a specific question, and came out having to answer it myself. The Advisor gave me the options (which I knew) and left the decision up to me.

- I've never had any problems or complaint's about the Academic Advising program in John Abbott.

- I had only once visited with an advisor and overall I found that he was willing to listen and help me out. He did his job efficiently when I had questions to ask about changing programs. It helped alot to talk to someone who could give the answers or advice I needed.

- I think that the academic advisors add abit of self-confidence to students.

- More information should be provided on how to get in contact with American Colleges.

- I found that the Advisors were very helpful and I felt they were on my side.

- Would like to see some pretty <u>female</u> advisors.

- The advisor did a good job.

- Academic advising is a Service I would not be ready to do without only I had to see several advisors before finding one who could really suit my needs. Imagine how a student feels about the Service if the first time he sees an Advisor the individual in particular turns out to be an absolute "D" throughout all of the questionnaire's section III... Personally however, I feel quite positive about A.A., especially since I've found the right person to meet my preferences. Thank you and Keep up with the good work!

- Students should have made their decisions when making a change of program, but I believe the advisor should requestion the decision and seek the real reason for a change of program to avoid the student making a hasty decision, as I did. I'm thankful for the advice he gave me, but I certainly would've gained if he had pursued the issue as to why I wanted to change program. I just wasted a year.

- The academic advising services are very good. The only problem I see is that students in sciences may look at their courses from a different perspective than advisors. (if) (non-science) * ie: are science courses tough*

- Overall, services were satisfactory.

- Advisors available on a drop-in basis must be increased. For some short questions that require a 5-minute answer, the students have to wait until the drop-in day arrives, or else make an appointment that is normally a week to 10 days later.

- As there is not a great amount of space alloted to this section I shall be brief. My only complaint is that I was not given any concrete or constructive advise on career possibilities &/or who to discuss this problem with.

- I found that different advisors tell you different things eg. Recommend different courses to take for University requirements.

- Please expand your career shop.

- It's nice to know that theres someone ther to help in you choice (s)

- The information given above was related to an appointment taken during busy times. Obviously the services would be much more effective if the advisor had more time.

- The advisor cleared up a lot of questions which Ihad, I would not hesitate to make other appointemnts If the need arises.

- My only comment is that I wish advisors were more accessible to students on a drop-in basis.

- I found it very hard to get an appointment, because they were always booked.

- The counselor I've talked with has been very nice - however, we seemed to be talking in opposite directions... I had the feeling that my questions were being musunderstood/misinterpreted. There is far too little info. on foreign universities, scholarship possibilities, etc. Though I haven't tried them, friends have told me that the career & interest tests are interesting & that the counselors administering them have been very helpful.

- I have not taken advantage to the fullest of A.A., but what I've seen I've gotten straight answers. In the future, I will be dropping by more often.

- After discussing my situation at length with an advisor, I decided to do the nursing program at University level, having already obtained a CEGEP diploma.

- In all everything was satisfactory. I am glad to have the Advising staff around.

- In general, I think you have a great Academic Advising system. Everything is fine!

- The academic advising system is well run and well staffed.

- As I said I would definitely recommend a academic counselling. However, try making an appointment (Good Luck!)

- I found Academic advising very helpfull, every one is friendly and caring. (Very good !! Allround !!)

- I feel that they should keep more up to date on university programs and admission requirements.

- overall excellent performance and a great help to me.

- Good to see youre so interested in the students. Glad to help.

- I thought the Academic Advising Department was extremely helpful and thoughtful !

- Excellent service although more drop-ins would be an asset.

- In all honesty I am very satisfied with the quality of service provided by the A.A.'s that I have met.

- I'm glad Academic Advising was available. The Advisors I had, were extremely helpful, considerate & understanding. A great help.

- I am pleased with the A.A. performance.

- I realize this is a tough time to get an appointment with an advisor but I have tried four different times with no luck. That would be my only complaint - getting an appointment. Otherwise, I was very happy with the advisor I had the first time. She was friendly & very helpful.

- In the two appointments I had, I had to have two different advisors, due to the unavailability of the first. They both had conflicting advice about my University choice.

- I am very satisfied with academic advising at JAC. I hope they continue to do excellent work.

- My visit was on a change of program but if I had an unsolvable problem, most likely I would consult an advisor.

- Basically, I found some staff very helpful and friendly but some of the staff are sarcastic and I wouldn't recommend this type of staff.

- I found it extremely difficult to find information about careers available in certain areas of study. I was continually referred to the college & career shop when I really needed to talk to someone about what sort of career was suited to me.

- This service is very important & I would reccomend that first year students see an advisor early in the semester.

- The only thing is that we should be informed about the differences between an academic advisor and a counsellor because I went to see someone and it was the wrong person.

- For the fourth question of the third section, I was forced to rate a C because I have not as yet heard back from my advisor about the possibility of university next year.

- Academic Advising has been a tremendous help to me, and I will continue going to see them.

- The new receptionist is a vast improvement over the one last year.

- I was quite pleased with the help I received, and found the staff very friendly and personable.

- Generally you receive more information by going to academic advising than not but I was given information that would have been detrimental to my plans had I not disproved it elsewhere in the college.

- A very helpful department, however several things do need improvement which I have outlined above.

- I feel that I haven't used student services to it's full potential but from what I have seen the service has been quite helpful.

- I received straightforward & useful answers to my questions as well as additional information so the session was helpful to me.

- If the accessibility and availability of advisors were improved, more students would refer to this service. Or perhaps, the service simply needs more advisors!

- I find that the receptionist at the Student Service's desk screens the students who are asking to see an advisor. Many times during my first two semestors I was turned away.

- The choice of book's supplied by the Library in the area of Criminal justice needs immence improvement.

- Course selection at registration & public transport eg. train.

- I feel that this is a great service. Very helpful. Keep up the good work guys !!!

- I feel that some advisors are better than others; they should all provide adequate services.

- My specific problem was inability to find info on a certain university (GMI): its reputation as a school and what the work force thought of it.

- The advisors made me feel welcome by showing their concern and made me want to return for more counselling.

- despite marks and attitude, an adedemic advisor should always encourage students in their goals.

- All first semester students should have to see an advisor at the end of the semester if they failed or dropped any courses because the first semester is when most students screw up.

- I found the Academic Advisor very helpful & guided me in the right direction. I hope this Student Service is here to stay !

- Students should be able to speak out against teachers they feel are discriminant and unfair at testing and evaluation marks.

- This semester (my fifth) I visited Academic Advising for the first time, and I wished I had gone sooner. I left my appointment feeling better and more optimistic than I had in months.

- Generally good services but there dont seem to be quite enough people to handle the workload sometimes.

- I generally found A.A. to be helpful, courteous, etc. It is sometimes difficult to get an appointment. They don't seem to know as much as they should about university entrance requirements. I've heard stories (from friends and others) about people getting "screwed up". A good friend of mine was told that there was no way he would ever get into Concordia. This was not the case, as he found out when he went down there. (He's now in his 2nd semester and doing fine).

- I did "choices" and found it very useful & interesting.

- I found the advisor very helpful, so I probably will return a few more times before I graduate.

- Academic Advisors must be commended on their work. It would be to the benefit of the students JAC to fill out a survey like this one in regards to the teaching profession of John Abbott College. Thank you for using me as a subject for your survey.

- I am now at Concordia, Academic Advising was a great help.

- I found that when my friend and I went to different advisors about the same problem, we got two different answers.

- The people were very nice and calm, but answered very little and left a poor gap of understanding with us.

- My general opinion about the Academic Advising is that the people are very friendly, and that is most important.

- I would like then more dispanible and we can take a appointment on everyday not only the Friday.

- I find it very helpful. It's too bad other student go through the whole semesters with their eyes closed, and don't seek any information or help.

- I found the advisor very friendly and helpful.

- I found them very helpful & friendly.

- I will recommend to the Advisors to advise the students to the college academic regulations on the first con...t, regardles of the reasons this student has to see them.

- The service is helpful and of great need to many students and it is encouraging to know where to go.

- Each advisor has his/her way of dealing with a student. I've only seen two advisors. I felt one of them was very helpful in all ways, she understood what I wanted and I saw the consideration and sincerity in her eyes'. The other counsellor was more * on a routine basis, after all, a student needs to feel that - he or she is special and worth it. She did not ask me any questions, just filled out my program planner told me the coarses I should take, with no ellaboration on the matter.
  Thank you.

- Very helpful service. Much needed. Excellent.

- Academic Advisors are an essential part to the life of the CEGEP. At Abbott they are great!

- The Academic Advising Council is always helpful towards me and am pleased with their service.

- Service and explanations were excellent.

- This silly questionaire coast someone alot of money.

- I went to Ac. Advising to learn about entering other universities & colleges. There could be some improvement on the advisors knowledge of their programs & application procedures.

- This service is very helpful to one who has never been to college, and not to school for the past 20 years.

- Even when the futur career looked shaky, a good chat always put me back on the right track.

- I think the JACFACT series should be worked on: it should tell more, and be more specialized. It is the only information we get written down that we can keep and re-read and understand.

- I have not seen an academic advisor at J.A.C. yet, but from what I have heard from my friends they are quite helpful.

- It is difficult to answer thes questions one advisor I saw was very good and friendly and the other was to busy talking to cistrn to memas it was I barely got a word in edge wise.

- I found that the advisor was rushed when I was there.

- I was very pleased with the staff at A.A. & with the way they handled my questions ect. Keep it up!

- I feel that the Academic Advising is very sufficent and most students need their advice and ..... at one point in time during their college time.

- Excellent services - very helpful, put confidence in my studies.

- A Big Help!!

- more updated information is needed in the College & Career Shop before the college application dates.

- Hi "Infidels" - Bob Dylon

- As a student in my first semester I was rather confused and found my adviser very helpful in explaining things which I found most mind boggling. I am very please with my advisor and plan on visiting in the near future.

- Academic Advising was helpful to me. I'd recommend them, they know their stuff very well.

- I am very pleased with the Info I received, but everything was done in an unpersonalized manner and in a rush.

- As a SUJAC type, I'd like to tell you: Good Job Folks!

- I think that they mixed me up more than anything else. I expected more from them. Sorry.

- Because advice given by Advisors is always taken as fact, I'm always on garde for mistakes they might make. I also tell others be careful. I careful with advisors because mistakes have been made that cost students time in taking wrong or uneeded courses.

- Appointment were hard to obtain near the deadline for dropping a course.

- Going through the process of gathering all the information to make career decisions is much too time consuming especially rough during the semester with classes and work.

- I found, although they were helpful, they never actually pinpoint my problem. its always, "O.K so come back & see me next week"

- I only feel that advisors should be available in a drop-in basis.

- Although the Academic Advisor provided me with adequate information, they should more often give an overview of one's other possible alternatives where CEGEP programs are concerned.

- I felt my advisor was extremely pleasant and this helped me to feel at ease when I most needed it. I went for only a program change but the advisor took it further and help me in the selection of available Universities.

(Note: Spelling is uncorrected from student's response sheets)

APPENDIX C

ADVISOR COMMENTS ON USE OF TABS

ADVISOR COMMENTS ON USE OF TABS

I. TECHNICAL USE

a) Did you feel comfortable using the computer to input your self-assessment and student assessment data?

b) Were the directions on how to use TABS clear? Were any of the directions unclear? If so, which ones? Did you require assistance to understand them?

c) How much time did it take you to complete both sections of TABS? ie self and student assessment.

d) What comments do you have on how the two sections were designed?

1 - self-evaluation

2 - student predictions:

e) Was the data presented in a format that was easy to understand? Which section did you find the most helpful? Why?

f) Did you require assistance interpreting the data?

II. RESULTS OF DATA

a) How accurate were you vis-a-vis student predictions? Where were you the most accurate?

b) Where did you underestimate? Why?

c) Where did you overestimate? Why?

d) What areas did you differ from the group evaluation? Did you know why?

e) Did you find the students' comments helpful? In what way?

f) Do you now have a clear idea of where individual, as well as group, strengths and weaknesses are?

g) Do you plan to make improvements in areas of weakness? What might you do?

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

a) Did you find TABS helpful? Would you use it again?

b) Were there any areas that should have been addressed but weren't?

c) General comments:

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